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1st Bn., 1st Bde., 9th IA Div. assumes responsibility for battle space

Maj. David Olson
1st BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – The 1st Mechanized Battalion, 1st Mechanized Brigade, 9th Iraqi Army Division, assumed battle space north of Baghdad from 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division's Special Troops Battalion, during a ceremony Monday.

The battle space assumption further increases the area of responsibility for the 9th Iraqi Army Division by approximately 18-square kilometers.

“The Iraqi Army is getting better every day,” said Col. James Pasquarette, commander of 1st BCT. “They are a capable security force. They impress me because they can gather intelligence from the Iraqi citizen better than we can.”

“They (the Iraqi army) are motivated and trained to take over the mission. I was really impressed,” said Capt. Lou Castillo, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, STB, 1st BCT. “They are a ready and trained force.”

The STB transitioned from land management to project management of all the infrastructure, reconstruction and essential services projects occurring in the brigade's area of operations.

"It's a good thing to have the Iraqi army assuming more of the battle space," Pasqualette added. "It's our goal for them to take over our entire area of operations before we leave."

"Since we are no longer responsible for the battle space that we had, that's a company that does not have to return to Iraq and is freed up to do something else," said Maj. David Patton, the operations officer for 1st STB. "Now we manage 73 projects valued over \$38 million throughout the Raider Brigade area. We will continue to be very busy."

In the BCT's area of operation, the 1st. Mech. Bde., 9th IA Div., is conducting independent operations. The 2nd Tank Bde., 9th IA Div. will assume their portion of the battle space in a few months.



Iraqiflag1.

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – An Iraqi soldier gives an Iraqi flag and a backpack to a local boy during a mission to deliver anti-terrorist leaflets and information to local residents on the outskirts of Taji March 11.

(U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate 1st Class Michael Larson, COMCAM, 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.)



Iraqiflag2.

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – An Iraqi soldier gives an Iraqi flag to a little girl as her family looks on during a mission to deliver anti-terrorist leaflets and information to local residents on the outskirts of Taji March 11.

(U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate 1st Class Michael Larson, COMCAM, 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.)



RIP1.

TAJI, Iraq – Iraqi Lt. Col. Abdul Wasi Mohammed, operations officer for 1st Mechanized Battalion, 1st Mechanized Brigade, 9th Iraqi Army Division, stands with Capt. Lou Castillo, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Special Troops Battalion, and Lt. Col. John Cross, commander, Special Troop Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, as they conduct a combined patrol together near Taji March 16.

(U.S. Army photo courtesy of STB.)